

RAKE'S VOYAGE  
AND THE WORLD

1577—1580

TWO CONTEMPORARY MAPS

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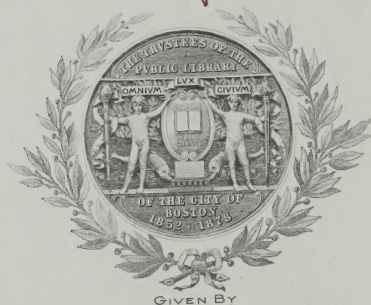
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SIR FRANCIS DRAKE'S VOYAGE  
ROUND THE WORLD

1577—1580

TWO CONTEMPORARY MAPS

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THE reproduction of these two maps, which are among the earliest to show the route taken by Sir Francis Drake on his voyage round the world, marks the 350th anniversary of the departure of the expedition from Plymouth in the autumn of 1577.

The Introduction and the description of the maps have been written by Mr. F. P. Spren, Assistant Keeper and Superintendent of the Map Room.

R. F. SHARP.

Atlas 10.4.1577  
British Museum  
Apr 8 1929  
DEPT OF BOTANY

## INTRODUCTION

THE two maps here reproduced form an interesting and probably nearly contemporary record of Drake's famous voyage of circumnavigation, and illustrate the geographical ideas generally current in Western Europe at the time of the voyage. They do not, however, necessarily contain evidence of the latest discoveries, for the object of the cartographer in each case (as may be seen from the titles) was to celebrate a famous achievement rather than to give a scientific and up-to-date picture of the known world. The maps themselves are thus more crude in design and less rich in geographical detail than certain other maps of the same period.

The character of Francis Drake and the main purpose of his voyage round the world have been, and still are, subjects of controversy. He has been variously represented as statesman, pirate, explorer, and commercial agent. It is unnecessary here to discuss the question whether the chief object of the voyage was to found a colony, to attack the Spaniards, to discover the North-West Passage, or to establish trade relations with the Spice Islands. That Drake was a great seaman and a great leader of men, and that he achieved a notable feat in sailing round the world, are facts beyond dispute and all that need concern us in connexion with the present publication.

A brief account of the chief events of the voyage will help to elucidate the maps. Setting out from Plymouth on December 13, 1577, with five ships, the expedition reached the coast of Brazil in the following April, having made short halts off Morocco and in the Cape Verde Islands. After various misadventures off the South American coast, including the loss of two vessels, the port of Saint Julian (in the extreme south of Patagonia) was reached on June 20. It was here that the trouble between Drake and Doughty came to a head; Doughty was formally tried, found guilty of treason, and executed on July 2. The expedition, now reduced to three ships, did not leave Saint Julian until August 17; the passage of the Straits of Magellan took from August 21 to September 6, on which day the Pacific Ocean was reached. Here Drake met with fresh disasters; in a great storm one of the remaining vessels (the *Marigold*) foundered with all hands, while another (the *Elizabeth*, under Captain John Winter) was lost sight of and finally gave up the voyage, returning to England through the Straits.

Drake's ship, the *Pelican*, which he had just re-named the *Golden*

*Hind*, was now left alone. The storms continued for many weeks, during which time Drake was driven far out of his course to the south and west, probably discovering Cape Horn in the course of his wanderings. It was not until November that he was able to make any progress in his voyage up the western coast of South America. Here, in the ports of Chili and Peru, much damage was inflicted by him on Spanish shipping, culminating in a daring raid on Callao (the port of Lima) and the capture off Cape San Francisco of the great Spanish ship the *Cacafuego*, laden with bullion, on March 1, 1579.

The *Golden Hind* now had as much gold and silver as she could carry, and Drake, realizing that the Spaniards were by this time thoroughly alarmed, decided to begin his homeward journey. After halting to repair the ship on the island of Caño, off the coast of Costa Rica, and making a raid for provisions on a port of Guatemala, he set sail to the northwest. Whether Drake really hoped to discover the western entrance to the much-talked-of North-West Passage is open to dispute; there is at least some reason for thinking that he had this end in view. He at any rate sailed far up the Californian coast, and possibly much further north. The various accounts of the voyage differ in this particular, some giving 42° N. and others 48° N. as the highest point reached—a difference of over 300 miles. In any case, the accounts all agree that Drake was obliged to turn back owing to the intense cold, and that, after sailing south for some days, he reached a convenient harbour in which a long halt was made. It was here that one of the most famous episodes of the voyage took place: the crowning of Drake by the natives and his formally taking possession of the country, which he called New Albion, on behalf of Queen Elizabeth. Some modern writers have seen in this event the first deliberate step in the English colonization of North America, and regard Drake as a pioneer in the founding of the British Empire; others consider the whole episode as merely accidental and of no real importance. Many attempts have been made to determine the site of the harbour used by Drake during these eventful weeks, and Drake's Bay, just north of San Francisco, had come to be regarded as the most likely place; recent investigations, however, have furnished reasons for regarding Trinidad Bay, which is considerably further north, as the probable spot. As will be seen later, the second of the maps here reproduced contains an important piece of evidence on this point.

On July 26, 1579, after many weeks on the Californian coast, the *Golden Hind* finally left America and set out westward on her homeward voyage across the Pacific. The exact course taken cannot be clearly established; but for over sixty days no land was seen, despite the fact that the ship's course must have carried it near a great number of

islands. Having at last, on September 30, reached the 'Island of Thieves' (probably one of the Mackenzie or the Pelew Islands), where provisions were obtained from the natives, Drake made his way slowly to the Moluccas or Spice Islands, arriving at Ternate early in November. Here he was able to develop his plans for establishing commercial relations with the East. The inhabitants, who hated the Portuguese, proved friendly, and a sort of alliance was made between Drake and the Sultan of Ternate, who sent some of his war-canoes to tow the *Golden Hind* into harbour. This event made a great impression on contemporaries, and came to be regarded as one of the outstanding achievements of the voyage.

After some days spent in provisioning the ship and taking in a large store of the spices for which the islands were famous, the homeward journey was continued. A halt was soon made for cleaning the ship; after which, in trying to clear the intricate channels south of the Celebes, Drake nearly met with complete disaster. The *Golden Hind* ran upon a reef, and for some twenty hours the position seemed hopeless; but by a sudden shifting of the wind the vessel slipped off the rock into deep water. Further trouble was encountered in these difficult seas; but early in March 1580, Drake succeeded in reaching Java, where he met with an enthusiastic reception, similar to that at Ternate, and took in a further store of spices. The final stages of the voyage were comparatively uneventful. The Cape of Good Hope was reached in the middle of June, and for the first time was rounded by an English vessel; a short stay was made in Sierra Leone in July; and finally, on September 26, 1580, the *Golden Hind* returned alone to Plymouth harbour, whence she had set out with four other vessels nearly three years before.

This was the second voyage round the world, and the first accomplished by Englishmen. The honour of first circumnavigating the globe belongs to Ferdinand Magellan, even though he himself did not live to finish the voyage which lasted from 1519 to 1522. Drake's achievement, though less than that of Magellan, was a very notable one, whether or not it be regarded as a first step in the founding of the British Empire.



# THE MAPS

## I. LA HEROIKE ENTERPRINSE FAICT PAR LE SIGNEUR DRAECK D'AVOIR CIRQUIT TOUTE LA TERRE.

[*Antwerp?* 1581?]

There is good reason for believing this to be the earliest of the maps which show Drake's route round the world. Some six or seven copies of it are known to exist, most of them in America; but the British Museum copy here reproduced differs from all the others in one important particular. It is the only one which has been preserved as a separate map, the others being all bound up in copies of the French work entitled *Le Voyage Curieux faict autour du Monde par François Drach*, editions of which appeared in Paris in 1613, 1627, and 1641.<sup>1</sup> This fact has led certain American scholars<sup>2</sup> to the conclusion that the map itself is a late production, and that it was prepared for the 1641 edition of the book, in which most of the copies are found. In spite of this, a close examination of the map seems to afford good (even if not conclusive) evidence for dating it some sixty years earlier and for regarding it as the first issued to illustrate Drake's voyage.

The general appearance of the map, both from the point of view of decoration and style and from that of cartography, suggests the late sixteenth century rather than the early seventeenth. The ornaments, for instance, round the insets and legends bear a close resemblance to those on the maps of Ortelius, published between 1570 and 1600, while several of the cartographical features (notably the stumpy shape given to South America) would be most unusual on a map published after 1600. But, quite apart from general impressions, the map possesses several features which point to the same conclusion. The fact that Drake's route is shown, but not that of Cavendish (who sailed round the world in 1586-8), suggests that the latter voyage had not yet been made; maps after 1588 almost invariably show both routes. The portrait of Drake, copied from an unknown original, gives his age as forty-two; it is known that in 1586, when Drake was in Holland, his portrait was painted there, and this portrait (giving his age as 43) was frequently reproduced; it seems unlikely

<sup>1</sup> The title varies in the different editions. The version given here is from the edition of 1641, in which most copies of the map are found.

<sup>2</sup> Notably H. R. Wagner in his elaborate monograph on the voyage: *Sir Francis Drake's Voyage around the World*, 1926.

that, if the latter portrait had been in existence when the map was issued, an earlier one would have been preferred to it. The evidence of the watermark is also of considerable interest, though caution is necessary in the dating of documents by this means. The mark on the Museum copy of the map is that of Jean Nivelles, member of a well-known family of paper-makers, who were established in Troyes during the greater part of the sixteenth century and the early years of the seventeenth. It is known that Antwerp printers of the late sixteenth century frequently used paper from Troyes, which was then a great paper-making centre, and some of the maps of Ortelius are on paper made by the Nivelles; this point, together with the fact that the Nivelles paper-mills were sold to another firm in 1621, seems to support the theory of an early date for the map. A further consideration worth mentioning is that if the map had been prepared to accompany the little volume of 1641, it is unlikely that the date of Drake's return would have been given on the map as September 26 when the text of the book gives it as November 3.

Thus the portrait, the watermark, and the absence of any allusion to the voyage of Cavendish supply evidence which points to a date not later than *c.* 1585, but there is reason to think that the actual date is even earlier than this. Examination of the map reveals remarkable carelessness and inaccuracy in its production. In several instances odd portions of names appear without apparent reason, as though they were stragglers from some earlier map, as, no doubt, they are. Two instances of this must suffice: in the lower right-hand section of the map is the word CORNI, evidently a fragment of TROPICUS CAPRICORNI copied from some other map; again, the word CUS, off the West Indies, is the sole remnant of TROPICUS CANCRI. Other instances of carelessness abound. In one place 'route' is spelt 'roete', 'Remus' is apparently meant for Ormuz, 'Ginantin' in South America is for Gigantiū, while 'Pelima' seems to be a mixture of Guanape and Lima.

During the winter of 1580-1, immediately after Drake's return from his voyage, the sea-ports of Western Europe were no doubt full of talk of his exploits and discoveries. There seems every reason, therefore, to think that in such a town as Antwerp, with its big sea-faring and trading population, the production of such a map as this may well have been hurried, in order to catch the popular taste while Drake's voyage was still the topic of the hour.

Several features of the map, apart from the question of its date, deserve notice. In the lower right-hand corner appears the name of the engraver: 'Nicola van Sijpe f.' He seems to be otherwise entirely unknown, and the name therefore throws no light on the dating of the map. Near this is an inscription of considerable interest: 'Carte veuee

et corige par le dict siegneur drack'. It is, however, impossible to tell whether Drake actually had anything to do with the map; indeed, in view of its many inaccuracies, it seems improbable that he had. The sentence is one that may well have been inserted by an unscrupulous publisher in order to make the map sell.

The insets in the lower corners illustrate two outstanding episodes of the voyage: the reception given to the *Golden Hind* by the Sultan of Ternate, and the perilous position of the vessel when she ran upon the reef off Celebes. Two small coats of arms (almost impossible to decipher, but apparently those of Queen Elizabeth) are placed near the two parts of the New World of which Drake took possession in the Queen's name: the Elizabeth Islands (to the south of the Straits of Magellan), and New Albion in North America. This use of the coats of arms lends colour to the view of Drake as a pioneer of empire, and it is perhaps not too fanciful to regard this map as the remote ancestor of the modern maps which illustrate the possessions of the British Empire.

The boundary lines shown on the North American continent have been the subject of much discussion, but their exact significance is uncertain. The curious inscription at the top of the map which appears to state that Greenland was first discovered by Drake must really refer to New Albion, though, even so, its mention of Saint Julian (the scene of Doughty's execution in Patagonia) is puzzling.

A map very similar to this in appearance, but with the text in Dutch, is also known. The two are evidently closely connected; but, as the Dutch map is without most of the mistakes and inaccuracies of that here reproduced, it seems reasonable to suppose that the latter is the earlier of the two.

II. VERA TOTIUS EXPEDITIONIS NAUTICÆ DESCRIPTIO  
D. FRANC. DRACI, *etc.* [Amsterdam? 1590?]

This map, like no. I, has no place of imprint and is undated. It is probable that it was published in Amsterdam; and, while the actual year of publication is uncertain, the range of possible dates is very much shorter than in the former case. The fact that the route of Cavendish is shown, in addition to Drake's, shows it to be not earlier than 1588, while various reasons make a later date than 1595 improbable.

The most obvious difference between this map and the preceding is the projection, the present map being in hemispheres. It is a more polished production than the Antwerp map; and the geographical details are less crude, though they do not by any means represent a knowledge of all the latest discoveries. There are, for instance, in North America none of the place-names associated with the voyages of Frobisher (1576-8), nor is there any mention of Virginia (1585). The text is in Latin, and the name of the engraver (which appears just after the title) is that of one of the most famous cartographers of the day, Jodocus Hondius (or Josse Hondt) the Elder, the successor of Gerard Mercator. He is known to have lived for some years (*c.* 1583-93) in London, where he associated with prominent English seamen. It was in London, no doubt, that he collected the material for his map, which may well have been engraved in England and sent to Amsterdam for publication.

There are five insets on the map: two are almost identical with those on the Antwerp map, and may perhaps have been copied from the same source; another is a picture of the *Golden Hind*, which Hondius may himself have seen at Deptford, where she was preserved for many years. The remaining insets, in the upper corners, illustrate events of the voyage: that on the right the visit to Java, and that on the left the stay on the Californian coast during which Drake took possession of 'New Albion'. The latter (showing the 'Portus Novæ Albionis') is of importance as one of the chief pieces of evidence in identifying the harbour used by Drake on the Californian coast. It is largely on this inset that the most recent investigator of the subject<sup>1</sup> bases his argument in favour of Trinidad Bay.

The names on the map, as well as the legends, are in Latin, with but one exception: the cape at the eastern entrance to the Straits of Magellan is marked as 'The fortunate cape', the name given to it on

<sup>1</sup> See H. R. Wagner: *Sir Francis Drake's Voyage around the World*, 1926.

the MS. map by Francis Fletcher, who was chaplain to the expedition. (On most maps of the period this cape is shown as 'C. 11000 virginum', or Cape Virgins.) The map contains several legends of considerable interest, mainly dealing with events of the voyage.

The British Museum copy has, attached to it on both sides and at the bottom, an account of the voyage in Dutch, which appears to be a slightly abridged version of the English account in the first edition of Hakluyt's *Principal Navigations* (1589). As the map and the text have, however, clearly been pasted together, there is no proof that they were issued at the same time or that they have any connexion with one another beyond their subject-matter.



# LA HERDIKE ENTERPRINSE FAICT PAR LE SIGNEVR DRAECK D'AVOIR CIRQVIT TOVTE LA TERRE.

La vraye description du voyage du s<sup>r</sup> françois draeck  
chevalier le quel estant acompaigné de cinq nauvres deux  
desquel il brula ung aultre sen retourna et la quatre  
fuit peris il partit dang<sup>r</sup> le 13 de novembre 1577 passa  
oultre et fit le sirquit de tout la terre et retourna audict  
royaume le 26<sup>e</sup> septembre 1580

TERRA ART NO  
VA  
GROEN LAN  
premierement descouvert par le signeur draeck  
saint julian 1579 fut le sig<sup>r</sup> couronne voy  
par les habitans dudit pays d'icez d'icez



la maistr<sup>e</sup> reception du roy des moluques  
s'arce au sig<sup>r</sup> draeck le faisant tire au port  
par quater de ses galeres et luy mesme conuoit  
des vaisseau dudit draeck et prenoit grand  
plaisir a ouir la musique

combien que lon pense que La partie meridie  
nale du desrois soit terre ferme ch<sup>z</sup> et ce qui est tre  
s'etant que ne soit qu'ilz desquiller la profunde de m<sup>r</sup>  
a este nomme chical par le dict sig<sup>r</sup> draeck  
qui p<sup>r</sup>mer la descoverte

Carte Venue et corige par le dict signeur draeck

Lamentable description du nauire du  
dict signeur draeck eschoue et hurlant contre  
le rock le 20 heures mais  
a la fin par la grace de dieu fust  
deliure dudit peril

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